

Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended) A system of collecting survey information comprising:

a communication device that initiates establishment of a communication channel between the system and a survey participant for presenting a question to the survey participant about a product, a service, or a product and a service with which the survey participant has experience;

a server for serving a first questioning series of core item questions developed to ~~support a survey purpose~~ elicit feedback from the survey participant regarding the product, service, or product and service; and wherein

said server is also for serving a second questioning series of drill-down questions, wherein each one of the drill-down questions is associated with one of the core item questions or another drill-down question and is presented only when a response to the associated question meets a specified criterion;

a database for storing survey participant answers to said core item questions and/or said drill-down questions communicated to the system via the

communication channel established for presenting the question to the survey participant; and

a survey presentation unit for automatically formatting and presenting said survey participant answers as a survey result to a user.

Claim 2 (canceled)

Claim 3 (previously presented) The system for collecting survey information of claim 1, wherein the second questioning series includes verbatim questions, and wherein said system includes a voice recorder for recording said verbatim answer given by survey participant, wherein said recorded verbatim answer is stored in said database by said system;

wherein a verbatim question is presented only when a response to a previous question meets a specified criterion.

Claims 4-5 (canceled).

Claim 6 (currently amended) A method of collecting and managing survey data comprising the steps of:

initiating a process of establishing communication with a survey participant;

presenting a first core item question about a product, a service, or a product and a service with which the survey participant has experience to [[a]] the survey participant and recording a response to the first core item question in a database;

automatically interpreting the first core item response for meeting a specified criterion;

presenting at least one drill-down question to the participant and recording a response of the participant to the drill-down question in the database, said presenting of said at least one drill-down question occurring only if the first core item response meets the first specified criterion,

automatically interpreting the response to the drill-down question for being within a predetermined acceptable response range, and

presenting at least one verbatim question to the participant and recording a verbal response of the participant in the database, said presenting of said at least one verbatim question occurring only if the drill-down response is not within the predetermined acceptable response range;

presenting a second core item question and recording a response to the second core item question; and

automatically compiling and presenting a survey report to a user, said survey report utilizing the answers collected from said survey participant for said report.

Claims 7-11 (canceled)

Claim 12 (previously presented) The system of claim 1, further comprising a voice recognition subsystem for converting vocal answers of the participant to said

questions into non-vocal data for storing in said database.

Claim 13 (previously presented) The system of claim 12, further comprising a display for presenting said questions to an agent, wherein said system monitors said answers of the participant and switches to a manual survey mode if the participant requests a transfer to said manual survey mode or said system switches to said manual survey mode in response to an evaluation of one or more of said answers of the participant or in response to a lack of an expected answer of the participant, and wherein said server serves the same questions to the agent that said server would automatically present to the participant so that the agent can present said same questions to the participant.

Claim 14 (previously presented) The System of claim 13, wherein the user is validated by said system prior to said survey result.

Claim 15 (currently amended) A method of collecting survey information comprising the steps of:

providing a list of core item questions about a product, a service, or a product and a service with which the survey participant has experience;

providing a list of drill-down questions, wherein each one of said drill-down questions is associated with one or more of said core item questions and/or is associated with one or more different ones of said drill-down questions;

providing a list of verbatim questions, wherein each one of said verbatim questions is associated with

one or more of said core item questions and/or is associated with one or more of said drill-down questions;

contacting a survey participant;

one of a plurality of agents requesting that the participant participate in an automated survey;

if the participant agrees to participate in said automated survey, conducting an automated survey including the steps of:

automatically presenting one or more of said core item questions to the survey participant;

automatically storing an answer of the survey participant to said one or more of said core item questions in a database, wherein said recording includes voice recognition of said answer prior to said recording;

automatically presenting at least one of said drill-down questions to the survey participant only if said answer of the participant to a prior presented core item question or a prior presented drill-down question associated with said at least one drill-down question meets a specified criterion;

automatically storing an answer of the survey participant to said at least one drill-down question in said database, wherein said recording includes voice recognition of said answer prior to said recording;

automatically presenting at least one of said
verbatim questions to the survey participant
only if said answer of the participant to a
prior presented core item question or a
prior presented drill-down question
associated with said at least one verbatim
question meets a specified criterion;

automatically recording an answer of the survey
participant to said at least one verbatim
question and storing said recording in said
database, wherein said recording is a
literal recording of the participant's
spoken answer;

automatically transferring from said automated
survey to a manual survey if one or more of
(1) the participant requests an agent, (2)
the participant fails to respond to a
question, and (3) an answer given by the
participant meets at least one specified
criterion;

if the participant does not agree to an automated
survey, requesting the participant to participate
in said manual survey, or if transferred from
said automated survey, conducting said manual
survey, wherein said manual survey utilizes the
automated survey method except that said
questions are first automatically presented to
one of the agents and then provided by said one
of the agents to the participant; and

using said answers in said database for generating a survey report.

Claim 16 (previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein none of the answers provided by the participant are provided using a touch-tone system.

Claim 17 (previously presented) The method of claim 15, further comprising the steps of:

automatically compiling said answers into said survey report; and

presenting said survey report to an authenticated user of said system.

Claim 18 (previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein all of the answers provided by the participant are provided orally and wherein all of said answers except answers to said verbatim questions are interpreted by using automated voice recognition.

Claim 19 (currently amended) A system for implementing the method of claim 18, said system comprising a server, a terminal, a voice recognition application, a connection device for contacting said survey participant, and said database, wherein said questions are stored in said system, said presenting steps are performed by said server executing one or more computer programs, said terminal is for displaying said automated questions to said one of the agents when said manual survey is being conducted, and said voice recognition application is for providing said automated voice recognition.

Claim 20 (currently amended) A system for implementing the method of claim 17, said system comprising a server, a terminal, a presentation unit, a connection device for contacting said survey participant, and said database, wherein said questions are stored in said system, said presenting steps are performed by said server executing one or more computer programs, and said terminal is for displaying said automated questions to said one of the agents when said manual survey is being conducted, and wherein said presentation unit is for presenting said survey report to the authenticated user of said system.

Claim 21 (currently amended) A system for implementing the method of claim 15, said system comprising a server, a voice recognition application, a connection device for contacting said survey participant, and said database, wherein said questions are stored in said system and said presenting steps are performed by said server executing one or more computer programs.

Claim 22 (new) The system according to claim 1, wherein the communication device is an automated outgoing call device that dials a programmed series of participant telephone numbers at scheduled times.

Claim 23 (new) A system of collecting survey information regarding health care, the system comprising:

a communication device that automatically initiates an outgoing telephone call in an attempt to establish a communication channel between the system and a survey participant who recently received health care;

a server for serving a first questioning series of core item questions developed to elicit feedback from the survey participant regarding a plurality of areas of performance for rating the survey participant's experience in receiving health care; and wherein

said server is also for serving a second questioning series of drill-down questions that are more detailed than the core item questions and are developed to elicit additional feedback on the survey participant's response to one or more core item questions, wherein each one of the drill-down questions is associated with one of the core item questions or another drill-down question and is presented only when a predetermined level of dissatisfaction is given by the survey participant's in response to the associated question;

a database for storing survey participant answers to said core item questions and/or said drill-down questions given by the survey participant during the survey; and

a survey presentation unit for automatically formatting and presenting said survey participant answers as a survey result to a user.